

# **Planning Commission Recommended**

**August 8, 2013**

## **I. Introduction**

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## Table of Contents

Introduction to the Area Plans .....	1
1.1 Overview .....	1
1.2 How to use this Document.....	1
1.3 County Area Plans, Sub-areas, and Community/Village Plans .....	5
1.4 Relationship to Water Planning Areas .....	7
1.5 Area Plan Organization.....	11

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Land Use and Circulation Elements Organization .....	2
Figure 2: Inland Planning Areas .....	3
Figure 3: Summary of County Area Plans, Sub-areas, and Community/Village Plans .....	6
Figure 4: List of Water Planning Areas .....	7
Figure 5: County Water Planning Areas .....	9

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# Introduction to the Area Plans

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## 1.1 Overview

This document is Part II of the Land Use and Circulation Elements (LUCE) of the County General Plan (refer to Figure 1-1). It refines the general policies of Framework for Planning (LUCE Part I) into land use issues and policies for the County's four inland planning areas: Carrizo, North County, San Luis Obispo, and South County (refer to Figure 1-2). It has been prepared to envision the future of these planning areas. Based on that vision, it serves as a guide for future development. It is intended to balance the social, economic, environmental and governmental resources and activities affecting the quality of life within the county in a comprehensive and cohesive manner.

**Note:** The terms "Land Use and Circulation Elements (LUCE)" and "Land Use Element (LUE)" are used interchangeably throughout this document and the County Land Use Ordinance.

This document describes where land use categories are applied in the four planning areas. It also establishes policies and programs for land use, circulation, public facilities, services, and resources that apply 1) "areawide," (throughout the entire planning area), 2) in rural areas, and 3) in unincorporated urban areas adjacent to cities. Goals, policies, programs, and related background information for the County's unincorporated urban and village areas are discussed in the Community/Village Plans (LUCE Part III). Framework for Planning (LUCE Part I) contains countywide land use and circulation goals, policies, objectives, and implementing strategies.

It should be recognized that the area plans are subject to higher legal authority including but not limited to case law, federal and state statutes and regulations and other countywide elements and ordinances of the County General Plan.

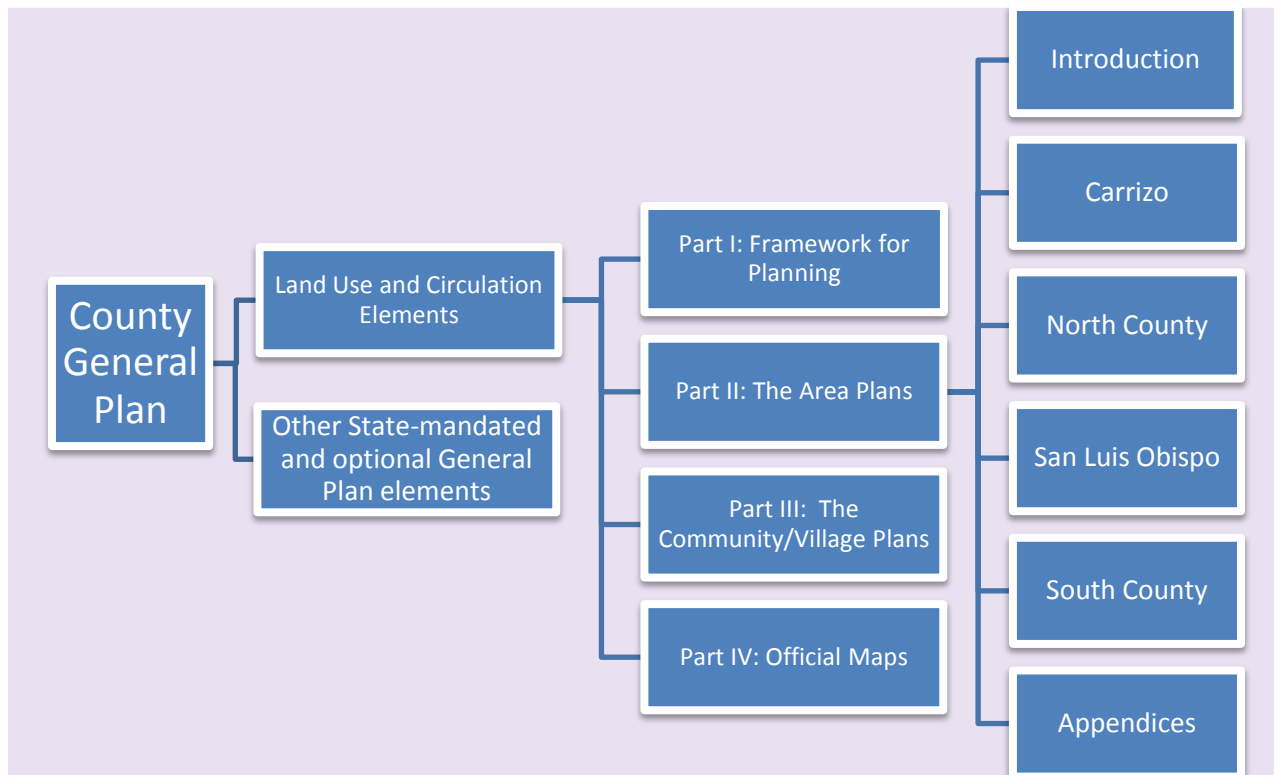
## 1.2 How to use this Document

This document contains goals, policies, and programs that apply in the following locations: 1) "areawide" (throughout the planning area); 2) in rural areas; and 3) within the unincorporated urban areas adjacent to incorporated cities. The "areawide" goals, policies, and programs in each area plan also apply within the urban and village areas in the corresponding planning area. Thus, this document should be used in conjunction with the applicable community/village plan (LUCE Part III).

In addition to establishing policy, the area plans describe regional land use, transportation, and resource-related issues and trends in each of the County's four planning areas. For example, the area plans describe water availability and air quality concerns that affect urban and rural areas alike. This makes each area plan an important reference that should be used in conjunction with the Community/Village Plans (LUCE Part III) within the corresponding planning area.

This document should be used in conjunction with Framework for Planning (LUCE Part I) and the Land Use Ordinance (Title 22 of the County Code). Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance contains specific, mandatory development standards that address special conditions in each planning area and help implement the goals and policies of the area plans. Article 10 of the Land Use

Ordinance contains standards that address special conditions in each of the County's unincorporated urban and village areas.



**Figure 1: Land Use and Circulation Elements Organization**

Figure 2: Inland Planning Areas



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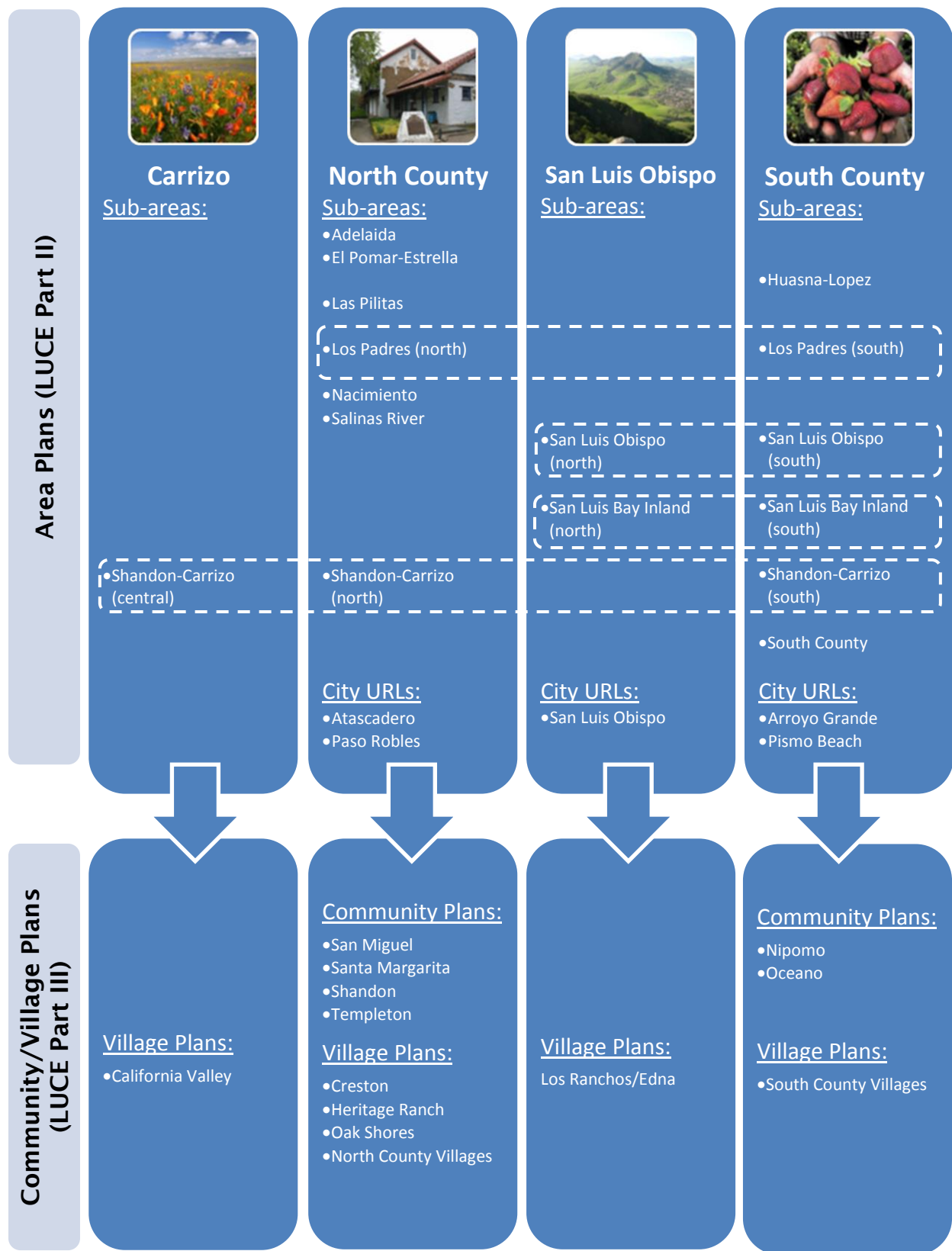


## **1.3 County Area Plans, Sub-areas, and Community/Village Plans**

The four area plans that make up this document consolidate and reorganize the content of 11 former area plans for four new regional planning areas. The geographic boundaries of the 11 former planning areas have been preserved in this plan as “sub-areas” of the four new regional planning areas. Figure 3 shows the sub-areas and communities/villages in each regional planning area. The areawide goals, policies and programs in this plan apply throughout a particular planning area, which means that they also apply within the unincorporated urban/village areas in that planning area. This is in addition to the goals, policies, and programs of the applicable community or village plan (LUCE Part III).

This plan is a reorganization and consolidation of the text of the former area plans, not an update. As such, the information contained in this plan is current as of the last major update or original adoption date of each area plan. These dates are listed in Section 1.3 of each area plan. While some non-substantive edits have been made to the former area plan text for consistent formatting and to reflect the new organization of the LUCE, no changes have been made to reflect current conditions in the planning areas.

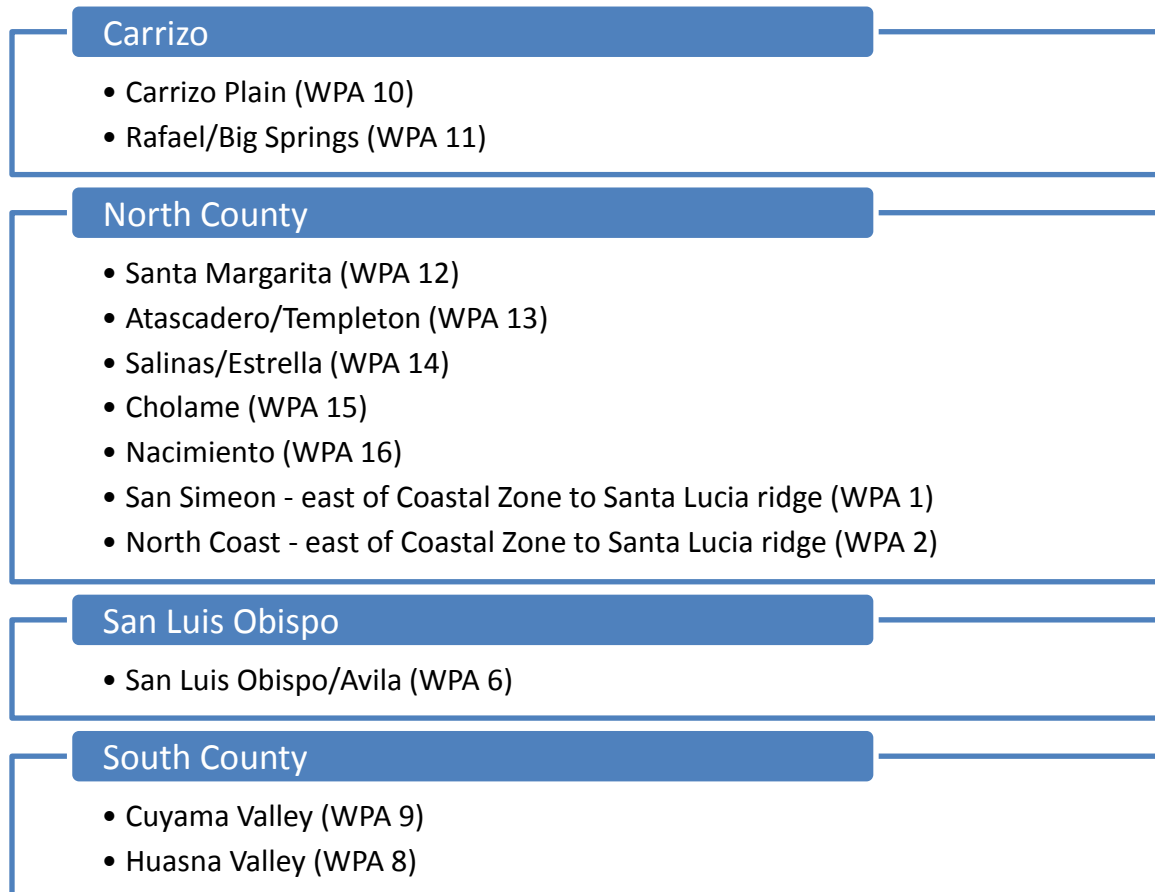
Figure 3: Summary of County Area Plans, Sub-areas, and Community/Village Plans



## 1.4 Relationship to Water Planning Areas

Each planning area generally corresponds to the boundaries of major county watersheds. Figure 4 shows the relationship between each planning area and the corresponding water planning areas (WPAs) from the 2012 San Luis Obispo County Master Water Report.

**Figure 4: List of Water Planning Areas**



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Figure 5: County Water Planning Areas



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## 1.5 Area Plan Organization

Each area plan is organized as follows:

### Area Plan Chapters

1. **Introduction.** General description of the planning area, including its current conditions and general goals.
2. **Population and Economy.** Population estimates, projections, and socio-economic descriptions.
3. **Public Facilities, Services and Resources.** Status of the condition of short- and long-term plans for existing facilities, services, and resources in the planning area. The discussion on services and facilities is limited to the rural portion of the planning area only. However, since resource issues, such as water availability and air quality, are regional in nature, this plan describes these issues for both the rural and urban/village areas. This chapter contains policies and programs that apply either throughout the planning area or to the rural areas only.
4. **Circulation.** Existing conditions and planned development of the transportation system, including streets and highways, transit, bicycling, rail and air travel. This chapter contains policies and programs that apply either throughout the planning area or to the rural areas only.
5. **Land Use.** Land use issues and opportunities for avoiding or solving land use problems and discussions of the mapped land use categories. This chapter contains policies and programs that apply either throughout the planning area or to the rural areas only.
6. **Combining Designations.** Combining designations identify areas of the county with hazardous conditions or special resources, where more detailed project review is needed to avoid adverse environmental impacts or effects of hazardous conditions on proposed projects. This chapter lists and describes the mapped combining designations in the rural portion of the planning area. It contains policies and programs that apply either throughout the planning area or to the rural areas only.
7. **City Urban Reserve Lines (URLs).** This chapter describes land use and circulation issues and opportunities within the unincorporated areas that fall within the URLs for incorporated cities (e.g. the Atascadero or Paso Robles URLs). Unlike the County's urban and village areas, these urban areas are not distinct communities; rather, they are unincorporated extensions of the adjacent cities.

### Area Plan Maps

1. **Land Use Categories.** The area plan contains maps that allocate land use throughout the rural portion of the planning area by land use categories. The land use categories determine the varieties of land use that may be established on a parcel of land, and they define allowable densities and intensities. The land use category maps at the back of each area plan are for reference purposes only. The Official Maps are on file at the County Department of Planning and Building.

Allowable uses within each land use category are shown in Articles 2 and 9 of the Land Use Ordinance.

2. **Combining Designations.** Combining designation maps identify areas that have certain hazards, proposed public facilities, special features or sensitive resources. Special standards for these combining designations are in Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance in addition to the standards of Land Use Ordinance Chapter 22.14. The combining designation maps at the back of each area plan are for reference purposes only. The Official Maps are on file at the County Department of Planning and Building.
3. **Circulation.** Circulation maps show existing and proposed highways and major streets and roads, transit routes, regional bikeways and transportation features such as park and ride lots. They are located in the back of each circulation chapter.